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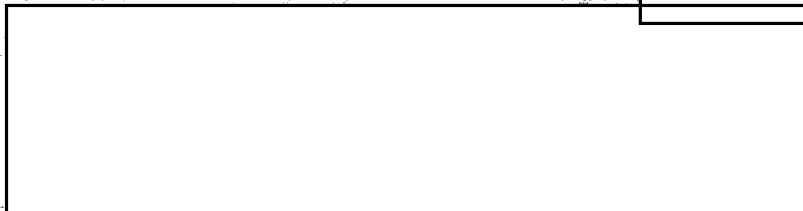
NSC BRIEFING

12 August 1954

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PERFORMANCE OF SOVIET TYPE 37

1. [] estimate of the new Soviet jet heavy bomber's probable performance, as it will be in 1957, now available. []



Take off weight

345,000 lbs.

Bomb load

10,000 lbs.

Combat radius

2,600 nm.

Combat range

5,100 nm.

Target altitude

43,700 ft.

Maximum speed

487 kts.

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This performance estimate (with 10,000 lb. bomb load, i.e. multi-megaton weapon)* indicates that, in absence forward staging (on Chukotsk) and range extension (in-flight refueling or one-way missions), striking power of Type 37 is still generally oriented toward Europe, Asia, and peripheral areas. Thus, full measure of Type 37's threat to US depends upon:

- A. Soviet development of in-flight refueling (capability not yet demonstrated and requiring 18-24 months to develop).
- B. Soviet decision in 1957 to expend all 50 Type 37's then estimated to be operational on missions where only half might be expected to reach targets.

* For other bomb-weight computations
Background - Bomb Load Variations

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III. New performance estimate. Therefore, ~~1957~~
~~mid-1957~~ picture unchanged. Conventional
TU-4 would still figure prominently.

medium jet - Type 39 - would be powerful
element of strength against Eurasian and
peripheral targets. Type 37 would just be
reaching significant quantities.

- A. In view Soviet nuclear capabilities,
picture is serious, formidable.
- B. But picture not particularly alarming
as regards continental US.
- C. With subsequent combination of Type 27
series production, forward staging
bases in operational condition, and
development of effective in-flight
refueling, however, Soviet air threat
to US increases sharply. becomes
very grave by 1958-59.